

SOCIAL CONDITION.

SAVINGS OF THE PEOPLE.

Working man's
Paradise.

THE Colonies of Australasia have from very early days been regarded in the light of a working-man's paradise. The high rates of wages which have generally prevailed, and the cheapness with which food could be purchased, have tended to make the position of the wage-earners superior to that occupied by the same class in any other portion of the globe. These advantages have induced a greater degree of comfort, if not luxury, amongst a class in Australasia which in other parts of the world has little of comfort and knows nothing of luxury. A high standard of living is not conducive to thrift, nevertheless the progress of saving has gone on with great rapidity.

Banks.

Some idea both of the celerity and extent of this accumulation may be gathered from the increase of deposits in the Banks carrying on business in the Colonies. It is true that these deposits cannot be taken as representing altogether local savings, as money not belonging to colonists finds its way into the Banks, and remains for greater or less periods on deposit there. In spite of this element of uncertainty, however, the following table showing the total deposits in Banks of all kinds in the Colonies of Australasia gives a valuable indication of the increasing wealth of the community.

Deposits in Banks (including Savings Banks).

| | 1861. | 1871. | 1881. | 1889. |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| New South Wales..... | 5,645,101 | 7,989,801 | 23,006,720 | 38,057,226 |
| Victoria | 7,575,406 | 12,476,677 | 23,721,348 | 43,740,869 |
| Queensland..... | 334,503 | 1,647,830 | 5,633,097 | 11,780,172 |
| South Australia..... | 875,327 | 2,038,719 | 6,231,004 | 8,728,134 |
| Western Australia | *2,487 | *15,583 | *23,344 | 868,757 |
| Tasmania | †729,085 | 875,512 | 2,969,390 | 4,807,102 |
| New Zealand | 905,675 | 3,789,639 | 10,618,893 | 13,786,055 |
| | 16,067,584 | 28,833,761 | 72,203,796 | 121,768,315 |
| Per head of population..... | £13 | £15 | £26 | £32 |

* Savings Banks only. † Banks of issue only.

From this it may be gathered that the increase of deposits of all classes in Banks between 1861 and 1881 was exactly 100 per cent., allowing for the increase of population ; while between 1871 and 1889, a period of only eighteen years, the deposits per head of population increased by about 113 per cent. When compared with Great Britain, it will be found that the amount of deposits per head of population in Australasia far exceeds that in the mother-country. In 1861, indeed, the sum per head in Britain exceeded Increase of Deposits.

that in Australasia, amounting to £15, against £13 in the Colonies. In 1874 the total in Britain amounted to £25 per head, which ten years later, in 1884, sunk to £23, and in 1889 to £16. In the Colonies there has been no falling off at any period, and in 1888 the total deposits per head far exceeded the highest level ever reached in Great Britain.

Savings Banks.

Turning to the case of the wage-earning classes in the Colonies, it will be found that the Savings Banks, which may be taken to be practically the Bank of these classes, show enormous development since 1861. From the return here given it is evident that the tendency for many years has been to an increase in the number of small depositors. The figures for 1881 and 1889 show this in a marked degree. In these eight years it appears that the number of depositors in Savings Banks increased from 311,124 to 631,173, or more than double. In 1881, however, each depositor had an average of £30 in the Bank, but in 1889 he had only £25. The amount per depositor in decennial periods from 1861 may appear to point to a serious retrogression, varying as it does from £47 to £25, but it is not so, for the large increase in the number of depositors must be taken into consideration. There is evidence that the different classes of the community are more largely represented, and the smaller amount of average deposit seems to show that habits of thrift have in a greater degree extended to the poorer classes. It is the total number of depositors and the total amount of deposits, therefore, which indicate the general prosperity of the people. A greater number of depositors than the comparatively small total for 1861 might probably be selected from the number in any of the other years noted in the table whose average deposits would far exceed £47. Queensland depositors have the largest amounts at their credit, averaging £36 per head, while those of Western Australia have the smallest in proportion to their numbers, being only £10. The subjoined table shows the progress of accumulation in each of the Colonies for the several periods:—

Extension of
habits of thrift.

Savings Banks.

| | 1861. | | 1871. | | 1881. | | 1889. | |
|----------------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|------------|
| | Depositors. | Amount. | Depositors. | Amount. | Depositors. | Amount. | Depositors. | Amount. |
| | | £ | | £ | | £ | | £ |
| New South Wales | 12,203 | 615,409 | 24,379 | 945,915 | 72,384 | 2,698,703 | 134,914 | 4,280,083 |
| Victoria | 12,001 | 582,796 | 45,819 | 1,117,761 | 101,829 | 2,569,438 | 268,462 | 4,971,933 |
| Queensland | 242 | 12,193 | 6,769 | 407,134 | 20,168 | 944,251 | 43,875 | 1,597,784 |
| South Australia | 3,248 | 131,590 | 14,270 | 517,000 | 37,742 | 1,288,450 | 65,815 | 1,905,632 |
| Western Australia | † 224 | 2,487 | ‡ 1,062 | 15,583 | 3,219 | 23,344 | 2,965 | 31,062 |
| Tasmania | * | * | 8,500 | 217,413 | 14,728 | 369,278 | 24,397 | 497,492 |
| New Zealand | 1,144 | 22,921 | 14,275 | 454,966 | 61,054 | 1,549,515 | 90,745 | 2,191,451 |
| | 29,062 | 1,367,396 | 115,074 | 3,675,772 | 311,124 | 9,442,979 | 631,173 | 15,475,437 |
| Amount per Depositor | £47 | | £32 | | £30 | | £25 | |

* Information not available.

† 1863, first year of Savings Banks.

‡ 1872.

INSOLVENCY.

Insolvency.

The view presented in the last section, of the accumulation of wealth in the hands of the people, would be incomplete without some notice of insolvencies. The Bankruptcy laws of the different Colonies are even more dissimilar than the laws on most other questions of importance; they have also been fluctuating, and the subject of many experiments and amendments. This renders any work of comparison difficult and unsatisfactory. The information here given is imperfect in relation to Western Australia, from which no reliable particulars have been obtainable, and also in reference to New Zealand, the returns from which are incomplete. In other respects the figures give a comparative view of insolvencies at decennial periods, and also in 1889.

Schedules of insolvents not reliable.

It must be pointed out that great caution should be exercised in dealing with figures representing the liabilities and assets of insolvents, because in the present state of the law there is no means of compelling those who seek the relief of the Courts to give an accurate statement of their affairs. The natural tendency is to understate the liabilities, and to overestimate the assets, so as to make the estate look as favorable as possible. It is very seldom indeed, when a bankrupt estate is finally wound-up, that the creditors find themselves in so satisfactory a position as the schedule as originally filed by the insolvent would lead them to believe. The real deficiency would therefore be considerably larger than the calculated amount, as given in the table:—

Australasia, Insolvent Estates.

| | Assets per cent. of Liabilities. | Average Deficiency per Insolvent. |
|------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | | £ |
| 1861 | 54·83 | 444 |
| 1871 | 46·49 | 525 |
| 1881 | 71·61 | 155 |
| 1889 | 90·34 | 156 |

Insolvencies.

| Colony. | 1861. | | | 1871. | | | 1881. | | | 1889. | | |
|----------------------|-------|--------------|-----------|-------|--------------|---------|-------|--------------|-----------|-------|--------------|-----------|
| | No. | Liabilities. | Assets. | No. | Liabilities. | Assets. | No. | Liabilities. | Assets. | No. | Liabilities. | Assets. |
| | | £ | £ | | £ | £ | | £ | £ | | £ | £ |
| New South Wales... | 463 | 589,727 | 335,340 | 544 | 325,941 | 124,288 | 724 | 379,290 | 218,212 | 1,101 | 794,603 | 396,723 |
| Victoria | 1,287 | 1,088,298 | 604,120 | 631 | 444,117 | 217,841 | 620 | 303,892 | 386 | 697 | 2,389,731 | 2,627,182 |
| Queensland | 24 | 46,866 | 35,341 | 73 | 411,835 | 197,934 | 153 | 73,602 | 39, A | 74 | 328,175 | 213,475 |
| South Australia..... | 108 | 101,140 | 37,379 | 247 | 246,713 | 117,794 | *696 | 123,629 | 83,729 | +190 | 57,707 | 31,423 |
| Tasmania | 155 | 173,933 | 84,410 | 25 | 62,560 | 35,360 | 33 | §13,770 | §9,588 | 12 | 19,993 | 13,564 |
| New Zealand | ** | ** | ** | 737 | ** | ** | 1,406 | 823,018 | 717,381 | 724 | 1,255,743 | 1,095,584 |
| | 2,037 | 1,999,964 | 1,096,590 | 2,257 | 1,491,166 | 693,217 | 3,632 | 1,717,201 | 1,229,726 | 3,088 | 4,845,952 | 4,377,951 |

* Including 481 private arrangements under Insolvency Act, the liabilities and assets in which cases are not included in the total. † Including 95 private arrangements under Insolvency Act, the liabilities and assets in which cases are not included in the total. § Returns not complete. ** No return.

Decrease of
Insolencies
generally.

From the table on the preceding page it would appear that the number of insolencies was greater in Victoria in 1861 than in any other year under notice ; while in 1881 the extraordinary number of 1,406 was reached in New Zealand, a total greater than any single Colony has produced in any year given in the table ; notwithstanding this large number, however, the deficiency between the estimated assets and liabilities was very small, amounting to an average of only £75 per insolvent. It is an important and gratifying feature that, in spite of the great increase of population, and the consequent extension of trade and commerce, the number of insolencies has increased but little, while the amount of the indebtedness of the bankrupts per head is less than at some former periods, and the proportion of assets to liabilities is greater. The proportion of insolvents to population in Australasia has largely decreased since 1861, the numbers being, per 1,000 inhabitants :—

| | |
|------------|-------|
| 1861 | 16·09 |
| 1871 | 11·46 |
| 1881 | 12·87 |
| 1889 | 8·15 |

NEWSPAPERS AND LETTERS.

Australasian
Newspapers.

There is hardly anything more indicative of the social superiority of a civilized people than the prevalence of correspondence and a large distribution of newspapers. In these respects all the Colonies of Australasia have for many years been remarkable. In proportion to population, it is doubtful whether any country in the world can boast of a larger number or a better class of newspapers than these Colonies. Great advances have been made in this respect since 1871, and the rate of progress, both in number and excellence, has advanced even more rapidly between 1881 and the present time. There is no means of correctly estimating the number of newspapers actually printed and distributed in the Colonies, because the Post Office returns indicate but a small proportion of the actual production. Some idea, however, may

be gathered for purposes of comparison with other countries, by noting the distribution of newspapers through the agency of the Post Office. The return for 1889, which comprises all the Colonies, shows that no less than 92,395,000 newspapers passed through the Post Offices, being an average of 25 to every inhabitant.

In the same year there were 161,154,000 letters delivered through the post, being more than 43 letters for every man, woman, and child in Australasia. An examination of the statistics of other countries shows that the people of these Colonies stand absolutely at the head of the world's populations in this respect. The inhabitants of Great Britain have nearly but not quite so large a correspondence per head, but the people of no other nation can even approach it.

Amount of
correspondence

PARKS, MUSEUMS, &c.

All the Australasian capitals are liberally supplied with parks and recreation grounds. In Sydney and the suburbs there are parks, squares, and public gardens comprising an area of 3,793 acres, including 780 acres, which form the Centennial Park. In addition to these there is the National Park, of 36,328 acres, picturesquely situated at Port Hacking, about 16 miles from the Metropolis. Melbourne has no less than 5,072 acres of recreation grounds, of which 1,723 acres are within the city boundaries, 2,780 acres in the suburban municipalities, and 569 acres outside those municipalities. Adelaide is surrounded by a broad belt of park lands, and also contains a number of squares within the city boundaries, covering altogether an area of 2,300 acres. Brisbane, Hobart, Perth, and the chief cities of New Zealand are also well provided for in this respect. In all the Colonies large areas of land have been dedicated as public parks. The Botanic Gardens of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, and Adelaide are included in the areas above referred to. Each of these gardens has a special attraction of its own. They are all well kept, and reflect great credit upon the communities to which they belong.

Parks and
Recreation
Grounds.

Botanic Gardens.

Museums and
Art Galleries.

The various capitals of the Colonies, and also some of the prominent inland towns, are provided with museums for the purposes of instruction as well as recreation, and, in addition, there are in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Hobart art galleries, containing excellent collections of paintings and statuary. All these institutions are open to the public free of charge.

PUBLIC CHARITIES.

As shown in the chapter on "Finance," wealth in Australasia is widely distributed, and the contrast between rich and poor, which seems so peculiar a phase of old-world civilizations, finds no parallel in these southern lands. That there is poverty in the colonies is undeniable, but no one in Australasia is born to poverty, and that hereditary pauper class, which forms so grave a menace to the freedom of many States, has, therefore, no existence here.

Propertied
classes.

It is estimated that in the United Kingdom six persons in every hundred possess property to the amount of £100; whereas in the colonies the proportion is twelve and a half per cent. This bare statement shows the vast difference in the conditions of life in Australia and in the richest country of Europe. No poor rate is levied in the colonies, nor is such needed; for although it may happen that from time to time the assistance of the State is claimed by, and granted to, able-bodied men who are unable to find employment, that assistance takes the form of wages paid for work specially provided by the State to meet a condition of the labour market which is certainly abnormal.

State assistance
to charities.

The chief efforts of the authorities, as regards charity, are directed towards the rescue of the young from criminal companionship and temptation to crime, the support of the aged and infirm, the care of the imbecile or insane, and the subsidising of private charity for the cure of the sick and injured, and the amelioration of want.

Supervision of
expenditure.

Even where the Governments grant aid for philanthropic purposes, the management of the institutions supervising the expenditure is in private hands; and in addition to State-aided

institutions there are numerous private charities, whose efforts for the relief of those whom penury, sickness, or misfortune has afflicted are beyond all praise.

The rescue of the young from crime is attempted in two ways—
 first, by means of Orphanages, Industrial Schools, and Reformatories, which take care of children who have been abandoned by their natural guardians, or who are likely, from the poverty or incapacity of their parents, to be so neglected as to render them liable to lapse into crime; and, secondly, by sequestering children who have already committed crime, or whose parents or guardians find themselves unable to control them.

Rescue of the young from crime.

It will be noticed that the number of deaths from accident in the Australasian colonies is very great. This arises from the peculiar nature of the occupations in which a large proportion of the adult male population is employed. Although a century has elapsed since settlement commenced in Australasia, its resources are by no means developed, and very many men are at work far away from the home comforts of everyday life, and from home attendance in case of sickness or injury. Hospitals are therefore absolutely essential under the conditions of life in the country districts of the colonies, and they are accordingly found in every important country town.

Necessity for hospitals.

The following table shows the total expenditure and the number of persons admitted to the hospitals during the year 1889, as far as information can be obtained:—

Hospitals, 1889.

| Colony. | Total expenditure. | No. of persons admitted during the year. |
|------------------------|--------------------|--|
| | £ | |
| New South Wales | 136,587 | 15,632 |
| Victoria | 135,209 | 18,356 |
| Queensland | 103,748 | 14,096 |
| South Australia* | 12,877 | 2,075 |
| Tasmania | 29,263 | 1,928 |
| New Zealand | 69,686 | 7,380 |

* Adelaide Hospital only.

Asylums for
the Insane.

All the Colonies possess institutions for the care of the insane, which are under Government control. The treatment meted out to the inmates is that dictated by the greatest humanity, and the hospitals are fitted with all the conveniences and appliances which modern science points out as most calculated to mitigate or remove the affliction under which these unfortunates labour.

The following table shows the number of insane patients, and expenditure for the year 1889 :—

| Colony. | No. of patients. | Expenditure. |
|-------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| | | £ |
| New South Wales | 2,974 | 100,302 |
| Victoria | 3,627 | 114,081 |
| Queensland | 993 | |
| South Australia | 790 | 22,066 |
| Western Australia | 123 | |
| Tasmania | 307 | 29,262 |
| New Zealand | 1,761 | 36,744 |

Destitute
Asylums.

The amounts expended on destitute asylums cannot be separated from other items of expenditure in some of the Colonies. As far as they can be ascertained they were, for 1889, including both Government aid and private contributions, in New South Wales, £59,966; Victoria, £57,031; Queensland, £14,281; and Tasmania, £11,553; while the number of inmates of the various asylums was, at the end of 1889 :—

| Colony. | Inmates. |
|-----------------------|----------|
| New South Wales | 2,500 |
| Victoria | 1,950 |
| Queensland | 581 |
| South Australia | 350 |
| Tasmania | 467 |
| New Zealand | 519 |

Out-door Relief

A liberal amount of out-door relief is also given in all the Australasian Colonies.

The total expenditure of the Governments of the Australasian Colonies in connection with all forms of relief and in aid of hospitals and other charitable institutions amounted in 1889 to £815,244; adding to this the amount of private subscriptions, &c., the poor and the unfortunate have benefited during the year to the extent of over £1,000,000. This sum, though not excessive in proportion to the population, may yet appear large in view of the general wealth of the Colonies, which should preclude the necessity of so many seeking assistance; and there is the risk that the charitable institutions may encourage the growth of the pauper element, for while free quarters and free food are so accessible those who are disinclined to work are tempted to live at the public expense.

Public and
private expendi-
ture in charity

PUBLIC MORALITY.

A gratifying feature in the social life of the Colonies of Australasia has been the decrease of serious crime in proportion to population. It is a peculiar circumstance that, though the people of Australasia are of one blood, and the laws against crime are practically the same in each Colony, some of the Colonies show a far greater ratio of conviction for serious crime than do the others. A crude theory has been put forward that this pre-eminence in crime is due to a convict taint in the Colonies possessing a comparatively high record. The incorrectness of this presumption will be manifest, since Tasmania—the province in the most favourable position but one in regard to serious crime—is also the one which suffered most from the transportation system. Whatever be the explanation, the fact, however, remains that New South Wales and Queensland—especially the first-named—have a higher rate of crime than the other Colonies. The official returns of the various Colonies, with the exception of Western Australia, for three decennial periods and in 1889 are given herewith.

Decrease of
Crime.

COMMITTALS AND CONVICTIONS.

Australasia—Crime.

| Colony. | 1861. | | 1871. | | 1881. | | 1880. | |
|-----------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|
| | Apprehensions. | Convictions in Superior Courts. | Apprehensions. | Convictions in Superior Courts. | Apprehensions. | Convictions in Superior Courts. | Apprehensions. | Convictions in Superior Courts. |
| New South Wales | 16,737 | 437 | 18,025 | 628 | 41,402 | 1,066 | 38,345 | 910 |
| Victoria | 25,766 | 846 | 22,800 | 511 | 25,346 | 332 | 37,321 | 651 |
| Queensland | 2,045 | 24 | 3,265 | 91 | 10,063 | 92 | 12,718 | 256 |
| South Australia | 3,581 | 122 | 5,475 | 91 | 14,297 | 213 | 6,625 | 78 |
| Tasmania | 599 | 127 | 3,631 | 74 | 6,229 | 51 | 2,594 | 42 |
| New Zealand | 4,830 | 100 | 15,606 | 162 | 19,796 | 270 | 18,476 | 325 |
| Total | 53,567 | 1,656 | 68,802 | 1,557 | 117,133 | 2,024 | 116,079 | 2,202 |

Committals and Convictions.

The Committals for Trial and the Convictions in the Superior Courts per 1,000 inhabitants for each Colony were for 1889 :—

| Colony. | Committals for Trial per 1,000 inhabitants. | Convictions in Superior Courts per 1,000 inhabitants. |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| New South Wales | 1·30 | 0·82 |
| Victoria | 1·00 | 0·59 |
| Queensland | 1·43 | 0·64 |
| South Australia | 0·59 | 0·24 |
| Tasmania | 0·71 | 0·28 |
| New Zealand | 0·75 | 0·53 |
| Total | 1·05 | 0·61 |

Diminution of crime.

The table given above shows that crime is steadily diminishing from period to period. The record of apprehensions cannot be regarded as a trustworthy guide, because it includes many classes of offences which are not to be fairly reckoned as criminal, and the number of these has a tendency to increase with the increase of local enactments of various kinds. On the other hand, the record of committals for trial forms a fair index of the serious offences coming before the Courts, and taken in conjunction with the convictions for crime in the Superior Courts may be regarded as

Decrease in Committals and Convictions.

conclusive on the question of the progress or the reverse of society in this respect. It will be seen that both committals and convictions have steadily decreased, beginning in 1861, but diminishing between that time and 1889 to considerably less than one-half. The following table gives a general view of this decrease of crime within a period of twenty-eight years :—

Australasia.

| | Apprehensions per 1,000 of population. | Committals for Trial per 1,000 of population. | Convictions in Superior and Circuit Courts per 1,000 of population. |
|------------|--|---|--|
| 1861 | 43·30 | 2·22 | 1·34 |
| 1871 | 36·23 | 1·38 | 0·82 |
| 1881 | 43·18 | 1·24 | 0·75 |
| 1889 | 31·46 | 1·05 | 0·61 |

In noting these facts and comparing results with that obtained in Great Britain during the same period, it must not be forgotten that most of the Colonies of Australasia have been compelled gradually to reform a portion of their original population, and that in the case of Colonies such as Victoria and Queensland, not originally peopled in any degree by convicts, the attractions of the gold-fields have drawn within their borders a population by no means free from criminal instincts and antecedents. Viewed in this light the steady progress made cannot but be regarded as exceedingly satisfactory, and a confident expectation may be reasonably entertained that the same improvement will be continued until the ratio of crime to population will compare favourably with that of any part of the world.

Progress of
morality

A very large proportion of all the apprehensions were arrests for drunkenness. In four out of the six Colonies from which returns are available the arrests for this class of offence amounted to nearly one half of the number of those taken into custody, and

Arrests for
Drunkenness.

ARRESTS FOR DRUNKENNESS.

in the other two Colonies was not far below one-third. The following table shows the arrests for all offences and those for drunkenness per 1,000 inhabitants in each Colony, during the year 1889 :—

| Colony. | Total Apprehensions per 1,000 Inhabitants. | Arrests for Drunkenness per 1,000 Inhabitants. |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| New South Wales | 34·73 | 16·63 |
| Victoria | 33·79 | 16·36 |
| Queensland | 32·03 | 15·51 |
| South Australia | 20·61 | 6·23 |
| Tasmania | 17·43 | 7·76 |
| New Zealand..... | 30·10 | 8·89 |
| Average for six Colonies... | 31·46 | 13·88 |

A return showing only the number of arrests for drunkenness is not a safe index as to the abuse of alcoholic liquors, for a great deal depends on the state of the law and the manner in which it is administered, and it is evident that the maintenance of the law will always be less strict in sparsely settled country districts than in larger centres of population where the police are comparatively more numerous, if not in proportion to the population, at least in proportion to the area they have under their supervision. The following table shows the number of inhabitants to each police constable for the whole of each Colony and for their metropolitan areas :—

Police in proportion to inhabitants.

| Colony. | No. of Inhabitants to each Policeman. | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| | For the whole Colony. | In the Metropolitan area. |
| New South Wales | 704 | 688 |
| Victoria | 734 | 718 |
| Queensland | 516 | 455 |
| South Australia | 776 | 763 |
| Tasmania | 478 | 705 |
| New Zealand..... | 1,238 | |
| Average for six Colonies... | 729 | |

The quantity of intoxicants consumed per head is another, and perhaps a safer index to the habits of the communities of the colonies in respect to drunkenness, especially as the mode of life is so similar in all the Australasian Colonies. Tried by this standard, the Colonies occupy the following positions—expressed in proof gallons of alcohol only :—

| Colony. | Proof gallons of alcohol per head of population. |
|-------------------------|--|
| New South Wales | 2·71 |
| Victoria..... | 3·82 |
| Queensland | 2·60 |
| South Australia | 2·58 |
| Western Australia | 3·95 |
| Tasmania | 1·88 |
| New Zealand | 1·64 |
| Australasia | 2·82 |

The consumption per head of various classes of intoxicants in the several Colonies is shown in the chapter on “Food Supply and Cost of Living.”

SUICIDES.

Suicides would unfortunately appear to be increasing, if not rapidly at least steadily. The following table, although imperfect as regards Western Australia, indicates a portion of the past history and present position of the Colonies in this respect :—

| Suicides. | 1871. | 1881. | 1889. |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| New South Wales | 28 | 83 | 112 |
| Victoria..... | 90 | 102 | 143 |
| Queensland | 8 | 21 | 56 |
| South Australia | 11 | 34 | 24 |
| Western Australia | * | * | 5 |
| Tasmania | 4 | 6 | 11 |
| New Zealand..... | * | 42 | 47 |
| | 141 | 288 | 398 |
| Per 100,000 of population..... | 8·58 | 10·62 | 10·66 |

* Information not available.

ILLEGITIMATE BIRTHS.

Taken over a series of years (1876 to 1888 inclusive), the mean annual rates were as follows :—

Deaths by Suicide in Australasia.

| Colony. | Per 100,000 of mean population. |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| New South Wales | 9·85 |
| Victoria..... | 11·44 |
| Queensland | 14·11 |
| South Australia | 10·04 |
| Tasmania | 4·68 |
| New Zealand | 9·10 |
| Australasia (six Colonies) | 10·41 |

Rate of deaths
by suicide.

Tasmania, therefore, stands in a more favourable position than any of the other Colonies, and is the only Colony in which the rate is less than in the United Kingdom, where deaths by suicides average only 7 per 100,000 of population. Information for Western Australia is to hand only for 1888 and 1889, during which years the suicides numbered 6 and 5 respectively, or at the rate of 12·91 per 100,000 inhabitants.

Births of Illegitimate Children and Total Births.

| | 1871. | | 1881. | | 1889. | |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| | Illegiti- mates. | Total Births. | Illegiti- mates. | Total Births. | Illegiti- mates. | Total Births. |
| New South Wales | 782 | 20,143 | 1,263 | 28,993 | 1,987 | 37,295 |
| Victoria..... | 747 | 27,382 | 1,382 | 27,145 | 1,809 | 36,359 |
| Queensland | 156 | 5,205 | 345 | 8,220 | 674 | 14,401 |
| South Australia ... | * | 7,082 | * | 10,708 | 255 | 10,318 |
| Western Australia | * | 760 | * | 1,005 | 67 | 1,594 |
| Tasmania | * | 3,053 | * | 3,918 | 191 | 4,757 |
| New Zealand | * | 10,592 | 534 | 18,732 | 612 | 18,457 |
| | 1,685 | 74,217 | 3,524 | 98,721 | 5,595 | 123,181 |
| Per cent. of Births | 3·19 | | 4·24 | | 4·54 | |

* Information not available.

Illegitimacy also is increasing upon the whole in Australasia, as the table just given shows. The ratio, indeed, compared with the total births is still rather better than in England; but while the percentage of illegitimate births has steadily declined during the last fifty years in England, it has advanced in Australasia during the period included in the table. The following are the average annual percentages of illegitimate births to total births, calculated over a series of years for each of the Colonies and the United Kingdom :—

| | Illegitimate Births per cent. |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| New South Wales..... | 4·40 |
| Victoria | 4·50 |
| Queensland..... | 3·96 |
| South Australia..... | 2·24 |
| Western Australia | 4·18 |
| Tasmania | 4·15 |
| New Zealand | 2·71 |
| England | 4·83 |
| Ireland | 2·50 |
| Scotland | 8·35 |

The question of divorce, which has assumed considerable importance owing to recent legislation on the subject, is one of much interest, the more so because for some years past all the Colonies of Australasia have offered large facilities for divorce in all cases coming within the law. The prevailing opinion has been that such facilities were calculated to increase divorce to an extent that would prove hurtful to public morals. So far as the experience of these Colonies goes, at present the fear would seem to be groundless, but sufficient time has not yet elapsed to enable any definite opinion to be hazarded. The following table, extending over a period of five years, is calculated to throw some light on this vexed question :—

Divorces granted in each Colony, 1884-89.

| | 1885. | 1886. | 1887. | 1888. | 1889. |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| New South Wales | 23 | 32 | 25 | 28 | 44 |
| Victoria | 21 | 16 | 18 | 28 | 38 |
| Queensland | 1 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 11 |
| South Australia..... | 31 | 18 | 14 | 16 | 12 |
| Western Australia | ... | ... | ... | 2 | 2 |
| Tasmania | 2 | 6 | 0 | 4 | 3 |
| New Zealand..... | ... | 24 | 16 | 32 | 17 |

INSANITY.

Ratio of
insanity.

The number of insane persons under official cognizance throughout Australasia on the 31st December, 1889, was 10,575. This represents 2·79 per 1,000 of the population. The rates in the United Kingdom for the year 1887 were—England, 2·88; Scotland, 2·91; and Ireland, 3·16. The amount of insanity in Australasia and in England, compared with their respective populations, is, therefore, about the same, though there appears to be a tendency in the latter country for the rate to increase. The ratios, both in Scotland and Ireland, are higher than in the rest of Great Britain or in Australasia. The following table shows the proportion of lunacy in each of the Colonies at the end of 1889, from which it will appear that the greatest proportion is to be found in Victoria, and the smallest in Tasmania, South Australia, and Queensland :—

| | Insane persons per 1,000 of population. |
|------------------------|--|
| New South Wales..... | 2·65 |
| Victoria | 3·24 |
| Queensland..... | 2·44 |
| South Australia..... | 2·43 |
| Western Australia..... | 2·81 |
| Tasmania | 2·0 |
| New Zealand | 2·84 |
| Australasia..... | 2·79 |

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Present condi-
tion of Austra-
lasia.

The preceding pages contain but a brief sketch, or imperfect outline, of the present condition of the Australasian Colonies; showing, in fact, only the most prominent features, but leaving unnoticed an immense number of details, which, if there were

space to introduce them, would add considerably to the impressiveness of the picture. Even the material resources of these vast provinces have not been fully indicated, for nothing has been said of the magnificent timber, unlimited in quantity and unsurpassed for quality, which abounds in every part of Australasia. Nothing has been said, either, of the boundless supplies of fish which are to be obtained in every part of the enormous coastline of these provinces, which will one day form the source of a large and profitable trade. The political institutions of the Seven Colonies have been described, but scarcely any notice has been taken of the system of local self-government which, in one form or another, pervades the whole of Australasia to a greater or less extent; nor has there been room to dilate at any length upon the literary, scientific, and charitable institutions which are to be found in all the principal centres of Australasian population, diffusing the blessings of art, science, and literature on the one hand, and soothing the pains of sickness, and mitigating the sorrows of distress, on the other. Enough has been said, however, to show how these great Colonies, from the humblest beginnings, have grown and expanded into important provinces, peopled with a race of hardy, enterprising, and industrious colonists, with free institutions such as are enjoyed by few nations in the old world, and without those social and caste impediments which are in older countries so great a hindrance to the march of civilization.

It is impossible for a reflective mind to survey the progress made by Australasia in one century without asking the question, "What will the future be?" It scarcely requires the gift of prophecy to find an answer. Here is an enormous territory, with illimitable resources implanted by Nature, without taking into account the possibilities of development by culture and acclimatization. Here is a people who one hundred years ago found Australasia a desert, but who have already begun to make it blossom like the rose. It is not to be supposed that they will rest

Australasia's
future.

content with what they have done, but rather that the progress they have already made will stimulate them to a further advance. They will not heedlessly trample under foot the vast mineral riches they know to underlie the soil ; they will not abstain from gathering those plenteous fruits of Nature which are to be had for little more than the labour of stretching out the hand. On the contrary, they will increase in numbers, in wealth, in intelligence, and in power, and the Seven Colonies of Australasia, whether federated into one State, or as separate communities united only by the common bond of kinship, are destined in the near future to play an important part in the world's progress, as much on account of the enterprise of their people as by reason of the magnitude of their territories and the extent of their resources.

